(d) whether there is any similar proposal for MMTC; if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDMBARAM): (a) to (d) Consequent upon the decanalisation of import and export of a number of items hitherto cannalised through STC and MMTC, the Government have been reviewing the need to reorient them in a manner consistant with the liberalised conomy and a competitive environment. As a part of reorienting the trade activities in the prevalent liberalised environment, both the corporations are in the process of formulating proposals for capital restructuring and diversification by way of tie-up arrangements in Joint Ventures to strengthen their supply bases for exports. The present equity base of STC & MMTC is Rs.30 crores and Rs. 35 crores respectively.

Subsidised sale of rice in Andhra Pradesh

1973. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has asked the Central Government to subsidise sale of rice in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether a partial subsidy would be given in 1994-95; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported that they are providing upto 25 kgs. of rice per month at the rate of Rs. 2/- per kg. to every household identified as poor by the State Government. The State Government has estimated an expenditure of Rs. 1265 crores in 1995-96 for this scheme. The State Government has requested the Central Government for a grant to cover this expenditure. Central Government makes available foodgrains for the Public Distribution System to all States/UTs including Andhra Pradesh at uniform Central Issue Prices on which the Central Government is already bearing subsidy.

Under RPDS areas foodgrains (wheat and rice) are issued at a specially subsidised price which is Rs. 50/- per quintal less than the Central Issue Price for the PDS.

There is no proposal to give partial/ additional grants or subsidy to any State/UT for this purpose.

(d) Does not arise.

Export of Marine Products

1974. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a saturation point has been reached with regard to export of marine products;

(b) if so, what fresh steps will be taken by MPEDA to give a new thrust to deep-sea fishing;

(c) whether MPEDA will extend financial assistance to revive the idle deep-sea trawlers in Andhra Pradesh to boost export; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) MPEDA does not propose to operate a scheme exclusively for reviving idle deep sea trawlers in Andhra Pradesh. However, MPEDA operates a scheme for encouraging modifications of deep sea fishing vessels for undertaking diversified fishing operations and for on board processing which results in better economic of operation.

Export of rice by private traders

1975. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the private traders have contracted exports of non-basmati rice in much large quantities than the State Trading Corporation and the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation during 1995-96.

(b) if so, the reasons for the Public Sector Undertakings lagging behind and whether there is any proposal to encourage the private traders to promote export of non-basmati rice;

(c) whether Government had announced in the Budget Session to export 2.5 million tonnes of non-durum wheat; and

(d) if so, how much of the wheat has been exported so far and if no wheat has been exported till 31st July, 1995, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) As per the EXIM Policy both basmati and non-basmati rice are freely exportable without any quantity and price restrictions. There is also no obligation on part of the exporters to register their contracts with any designated agency. The data on export contracts signed by the exporters is not maintained. Measures initiated to enhance export of non-basmati rice include:

(i) removal of all price and quantity restrictions.

(ii) Food Corporation of India has also been permitted to export/sell for export, 2.0 million MTs of fine and superfine rice from the central pool during 1995-96.

(iii) assistance in organising overseas campaigns and participation in trade fairs/exhibitions;

(iv) providing financial assistance to exporters in improving quantity, packing, brand promotion of products, conducting market surveys etc.

(c) and (d) For the current year, 1995-96, export of non-durum wheat upto a ceiling of 2.5 million tonnes has been permitted. Upto May 1995, 2755 tonnes of wheat valued at Rs. 1.53 corores (source DGCI&S) has been exported.

Reviving sick branches of Super Bazar

1976. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to revive sick and loss making branches of Super Bazar;

(b) if so, the names of these branches;

(c) whether a group of MPs have been asked to inquire in the matter; and

(d) what measures are being taken to revive these branches?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Relaxing of tariffs for U.S. Companies

1977. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to relax tariffs further for U.S. companies on a case by case basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof with benefits accuring to the country;

(c) whether such a move will attract more foreign investment; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Rates and quantities of Imported/ Exported agricultural produce

1978. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the rate and quantity of onions, potatoes, wheat, Basmati rice, non-Basmati rice, cotton and other primary agricultural produce exported/imported during the last three years, year-wise and foreign exchange earned and spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): The rates at which specific agricultural commodities are exported and imported are not maintained. The quantity and value of exports and imports of agricultural products during the last three years are given in the Foreign Trade Statistics published by DGCI&S, Calcutta copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.